

Nurse Recruitment and Retention Incentives

Health Workforce Planning and Implementation

April 05, 2024

Memorandum of Understanding: Recruitment and Retention Incentives

Time-Limited Incentives – One-Time Funding Proposal

- Funds will be allocated under section 6 of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU): Process for Establishing, Reviewing/Amending Minimum Nursing/Staff Ratios.
- The following initiatives will require a time-limited MOA between the Nurses' Bargaining Association (NBA) and Health Employers Association of BC (HEABC).
- These incentives are for nurses (RNs, RPNs, and LPNs) covered by the NBA Collective Agreement.
- These incentives will be available in fiscal year 2024/25 (i.e., April 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025).
- If implementation is delayed, retroactive payments will be made to the beginning of 2024/25 (i.e., April 1, 2024) in situations where a nurse is otherwise eligible for an incentive.
- Total signing bonus/recruitment incentive amounts provided to healthcare workers may not exceed:
 - \$30,000 for rural and remote communities in Northern Health.
 - \$20,000 for rural and remote communities in other health authorities.
 - \$15,000 for urban and metro communities.
- If a nurse is eligible for other incentives being provided by Health Authorities (Appendix A for a non-exhaustive list of examples) they will receive the larger incentive.
 - Health Authorities will provide quarterly reporting to the Ministry on incentive utilization/distribution, including reporting on instances where nurses may be eligible for existing HA and provincial incentives.

1. Provincial Rural Retention Incentive (PRRI)

- Eligible staff in recommended communities (Appendix B) will receive up to **\$2,000/quarter pro-rated to productive hours¹** to a maximum of \$8,000/year, from April 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025.
- Eligible hours will be based on productive hours as opposed to solely on straight time hours to a maximum of 412.5 hours per quarterly period.
- **Productive Hours** include all worked hours such as straight time and overtime. It excludes any non-worked hours such as vacation, sick time, union leave, and non-required education time. Employer required education leave hours will however be added to productive hours for the purpose of this incentive.
- RNs, RPNs, and LPNs are eligible for this program provided they are employed in regular positions by a Health Authority or Providence Health Care (HAs/PHC) in eligible communities.
- Existing GoHealth BC nurses are eligible for this incentive for Productive Hours worked in the eligible communities (Appendix B).
- Casual RNs, RPNs and LPNs employed by a Health Authority (including GoHealth BC nurses) or Providence Health Care who are in a temporary appointment as per Article 17.02 in the NBA collective agreement at the end of a fiscal quarter within the April 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025, fiscal year are eligible for Productive Hours worked in the temporary appointment.
- Nurses who do not qualify for the full \$2000 quarterly incentive payment in each quarter, who nonetheless work a total of 1650 productive hours from April 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025, will nonetheless receive the maximum cumulative incentive of \$8,000. For clarity, this means that the final quarterly payment may exceed \$2000, up to a maximum of \$8,000 in cumulative PRRI payments over the year.

¹ Prorated proportionally where less than 412.5 productive hours are worked in a quarter.

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2. GoHealth BC Recruitment and Retention Incentive

GoHealth BC is a provincial response to agency staffing in partnership with Northern Health Authority (NHA) and the BC Nurses Union (BCNU), deploying HA-employed travel nurses to rural and remote communities across B.C. By providing nurses with the opportunity to take flexible, short-term deployments, GoHealth BC provides an alternative to agency work and supports sites in B.C. to stay open and staffed.

The GoHealth BC Recruitment and Retention Incentive is designed to enhance staffing and prevent destabilization by promoting recruitment to GoHealth BC from outside of the B.C. public sector/B.C. First Nations service providers/First Nations Health Authority.

- Nurses who join GoHealth BC between April 1, 2024, and March 31, 2025, in regular positions are eligible for a recruitment incentive if they:
 - Join the GoHealth BC program from outside of B.C.; or
 - Are new to the public sector (have not been employed by a B.C. health authority or any other HEABC employer, or by a First Nation service provider or the First Nations Health Authority, or by a private/affiliate long-term care/assisted living employer in B.C.) for a minimum of 12 months prior to joining GoHealth BC.
 - Nurses who are employed by third party staffing agencies are eligible for the incentive if they meet the eligibility criteria above.
- GoHealth nurses who hold Specialty Nurses certifications in designated service areas (Emergency Room, Intensive Care Units, Operating Room, Maternity) and are hired into positions that are scheduled to work in those designated service areas as part of their regular rotation will receive a \$10,000 recruitment incentive with a 12 month return of service (ROS).
 - The nurse must remain employed in a regular position for a period of 12 months and work a minimum of 1,000 hours within that 12-month period, failing which the employer will recover the incentive payment made, on a pro-rata basis. Calculations will be based on the 1000-hour commitment.
 - Upon completion of 1,500 productive hours within the 12-month return of service period worked as a GoHealth BC nurse with a Specialty Nurses Certificate and scheduled to work in specialty service delivery areas as part of their regular rotation, they will also be eligible to receive an additional one-time \$5,000 retention incentive.
- Other eligible GoHealth BC nurses (no specialty certificate), as outlined above, will receive a **\$5,000 recruitment incentive** with a 12 month return of service (ROS).
 - The nurse must remain employed as a regular nurse for a period of 12 months and work a minimum of 1,000 hours within that 12-month period, failing which the employer will recover the incentive payment made, on a pro-rata basis.
 - Upon completion of 1,500 productive hours within the 12-month return of service period worked as a GoHealth BC nurse, they will receive an additional one-time \$3,000 retention incentive.

3. Rural and Remote Recruitment Incentive

To support filling vacancies in eligible rural and remote communities, recruitment incentives will be available for nurses starting careers in rural and remote communities across B.C.

- The Ministry of Health will decide on a set of provincial criteria for determining the eligibility of vacancies for the recruitment incentive.
- Eligible nurses are those who:

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- Are new to an eligible community (including those employed in an urban/metro centre, relocating to a rural/remote community, or new to B.C.'s public health sector), or
- GoHealth BC nurses who accept an eligible permanent position.
- In addition, nurses who are otherwise eligible will not be precluded from this incentive by virtue of having been employed as an Employed Student Nurse (ESN).
- Nurses currently employed in a rural/remote community relocating to another rural/remote community are *not* eligible.
- Nurses who are employed by third party staffing agencies are eligible for the incentive if they meet the eligibility criteria above.
- To prevent destabilization, nurses who were employed by a First Nation service provider or by the First Nations Health Authority or by a private/affiliate long-term care or assisted living employer in the community within the last 12 months prior to their date of hire are not eligible.

Nurses will be eligible for:

- An incentive payment of up to \$30,000 pro-rated based on FTE for nurses (RNs, RPNs, and LPNs) who during 2024/25 (April 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025) fill Ministry-identified high-needs vacancies in rural and remote communities with a 24-month return of service (ROS).
 - Due to higher vacancy rates and more complex challenges, eligible vacancies identified in rural and remote communities in **Northern Health will be eligible for \$30,000** incentive payments (prorated based on FTE of the eligible vacancy).
 - Rural and remote communities are those listed in the Rural Subsidiary Agreement (Appendix C).
 - Nurses who are recruited into eligible vacancies identified outside of Northern Health will be eligible for **\$20,000** incentive payments (prorated based on FTE of the eligible vacancy).
- These figures are the maximum amount for any recruitment incentive or signing bonus, including those not listed here, that an eligible healthcare worker may receive. For example, a nurse who has accessed the GoHealth BC Recruitment Incentive and is subsequently employed in a regular vacancy eligible for the Rural and Remote Recruitment Incentive may access both incentives; however, the combined total of the incentive payments will be limited to the maximum Rural and Remote Recruitment Incentive for the area (i.e. \$30,000 for an eligible Northern Health community or \$20,000 for another eligible community). The Rural and Remote Recruitment Incentive payable will be reduced as required to meet the combined maximum total.
- Nurses who qualify for the recruitment incentive will receive the incentive payment by signing and completing a 24-month return of service.
- Nurses who qualify for the recruitment incentive will not be eligible to receive the Provincial Rural Retention Incentive until completion of their return of service.
- The nurse must remain employed as a regular nurse for a period of 24 months, failing which the employer will recover the incentive payment made, on a pro-rata basis.

4. Recruitment Incentive for Difficult to Fill Vacancies

In urban and metro areas of the province, **nurses who are new to B.C.'s public sector health workforce** may be eligible for a recruitment incentive when filling Ministry-identified difficult-to-fill vacancies.

- An incentive payment of **up to \$15,000 pro rated based on FTE of the vacancy for** nurses (RNs, RPNs, and LPNs) who during FY24/25 (April 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025) fill Ministry-identified difficult-to-fill vacancies in urban and metro communities with a 24 month return of service.
- Eligible nurses are those who either:

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- Are **new hires to HEABC member employers during FY24/25**, including out of province hires, new graduates, and internationally educated nurses, **except:**
 - Nurses who have been employed by an HEABC member or by a First Nation service provider or First Nations Health Authority or private/affiliate long-term care/assisted living employer in B.C. within the last 12 months before their date of hire.
- Or, are current (at the start of FY 24/25) internal casual nurses, who have not held a regular position with an HEABC member employer, First Nation service provider, First Nations Health Authority, or private/affiliate long-term care/assisted living employer in B.C. for 12 months
- In addition, nurses who are otherwise eligible will not be precluded from this incentive by virtue of having been employed as an Employed Student Nurse (ESN).
- Nurses who are employed by third party staffing agencies are eligible for the incentive if they meet the eligibility criteria above.
- Nurses who qualify for the recruitment incentive will receive payment by signing and completing a 24-month return of service.
- Nurses must remain employed as a regular nurse for a period of 24 months, failing which the employer will recover the incentive payment made, on a pro-rata basis.

Training & Bursary Opportunities

- Funds will be allocated under section 6 of the MOU.
- The programs below do not require additional agreements:
- IEN Bridging Program Expansion.
- KPU and Fraser Health LPN-to-RN Bridging Pilot.
- Nursing Student Tuition Grant.
- Indigenous Nursing Student Tuition Grant.
- External Bursary Programs.
- New Graduate Transition Program Bursaries.

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Miranda Mason
ADM, Health Workforce Planning, Nursing, and ...

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Jim Gould
Chief Executive Officer, BC Nurses' Union

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APPENDIX A – Existing Incentives In the Province

If a nurse is eligible for the incentives listed in this document and another incentive provided by health authorities, they will receive the larger incentive. The health authority will report on eligibility of incentives to the Ministry of Health on a quarterly basis. Some of the identified Health Authority incentives include:

- Interior Health - \$10,000 signing bonus for eligible rural communities
- Island Health and Northern Health - Rural and Remote Nursing Incentive (RRNI) \$10,000
- Northern Health - Northern Rural Critical Care Incentive \$20,000
- Other incentives as identified by the Ministry of Health

Appendix B – PRRI Eligible Communities

56 communities are being added to the PRRI:

Health Authority and Local Health Area	Community Name and Count
Fraser	1 new community
211 Hope	Hope
Interior	23 new communities
111 Fernie	Fernie, Elkford, Sparwood
114 Windermere	Invermere
115 Creston	Creston
116 Golden	Golden
121 Kootenay Lake	Kootenay Lake
122 Nelson	Nelson
123 Castlegar	Castlegar
124 Arrow Lakes	Arrow Lakes
133 Keremeos	Keremeos
134 Princeton	Princeton
139 Enderby	Enderby
141 Revelstoke	Revelstoke
144 100 Mile House	100 Mile House
145 North Thompson	Clearwater
146 Cariboo-Chilcotin	Williams Lake
147 Lillooet	Lillooet
148 South Cariboo	Lytton, Ashcroft, Cache Creek, Clinton
149 Merritt	Merritt
Island	10 new communities
414 Southern Gulf Islands	Salt Spring, Pender, Galiano, Mayne, Saturna
426 Alberni-Clayoquot	Bamfield, Port Alberni, Tofino, Ucluelet
433 Vancouver Island West	Gold River
Northern	16 new communities
511 Snow Country	Stewart
514 Smithers	Houston, Smithers
515 Kitimat	Kitimat
516 Sitkine	Atlin
	Dease Lake

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Health Authority and Local Health Area	Community Name and Count
517 Terrace	Terrace
521 Quesnel	Quesnel
522 Burns Lake	Burns Lake
523 Nechako	Fort St. James, Fraser Lake, Granisle, Vanderhoof
524 Prince George Rural	Mackenzie, McBride, Valemount
Vancouver Coastal	6 new communities
336 Bella Coola Valley	Bella Coola
337 Central Coast	Bella Bella
334 Powell River	Powell River City, qathet
333 Sunshine Coast	Gibsons, Sechelt

18 communities are currently covered by the prototype incentive program and will continue to receive the incentive under the expanded PRRI:

Health Authority and Local Health Area	Community Name
Interior	2 prototype communities
126 Grand Forks	Grand Forks, Kettle Valley
Island	4 prototype communities
434 Vancouver Island North	Mt Waddington, Port Alice, Port Hardy, Port McNeill
Northern	12 prototype communities
510 Haida Gwaii	Daajing Giids, Masset, Port Clements
512 Prince Rupert	Prince Rupert, Port Edward
513 Upper Skeena	New Hazelton
531 Peace River South	Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Tumbler Ridge
532 Peace River North	Fort St. John, Hudson's Hope
533 Fort Nelson	Fort Nelson

Appendix C – Rural Practice Subsidiary Agreement Rural Retention Program community list²

Health Authority and Community	RSA Community Designation
Fraser	
Agassiz / Harrison / Seabird Island Band	C
Boston Bar / Boston Bar First Nation / Spuzzum	A
Hope / Chawathil / Peters First Nation / Shxw'Ow'Hamel First Nation / Skawahlook First Nation (Sq'ewá:lxw) / Union Bar Road / Yale	C
Samahquam	A
Skatin	B
Tipella	B
Interior	
100 Mile House	A
Armstrong / Spallumcheen	D
Ashcroft / Cache Creek / Ashcroft Indian Band / Bonaparte Indian Band / Oregon Jack Creek Indian Band	A
Balfour / Procter	B

² Rural Practice Subsidiary Agreement, 2024/25, https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/practitioner-pro/rrp_points.pdf

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Health Authority and Community	RSA Community Designation
Barriere / Simpcw First Nation / Whispering Pines Indian Band (Clinton Indian Band)	B
Big White	B
Blind Bay	C
Blue River	A
Bridge Lake	A
Canal Flats	A
Canoe Creek Band / Dog Creek / Esk'etemc First Nation	A
Castlegar	B
Chase / Scotch Creek / Adams Lake Indian Band / Anglemont / Little Shuswap Indian Band / Neskonlith Indian Band	B
Christina Lake	A
Clearwater	A
Clinton / Highbar First Nations	A
Cranbrook / ?aq'am (St. Mary's)	A
Crescent Valley	B
Creston / Lower Kootenay Band	A
Edgewood	A
Elkford	A
Enderby / Splotsin Tsm7aksaltn	C
Fernie	A
Gold Bridge / Bralorne	A
Golden	A
Grand Forks	A
Grasmere / Tobacco Plains Band	A
Greenwood / Midway / Rock Creek	A
Invermere / Windermere / ?Akisq'nuk (Akisqnuk) / Shuswap Band	A
Kaslo	A
Keremeos	C
Kimberley	A
Kootenay Bay / Riondel / Crawford Bay	A
Lillooet / Bridge River / Cayoose Creek Indian Band (Sekw'el'was) / Lillooet Indian Band (T'it'q'et) / Xaxli'p First Nation / Xwisten	B
Logan Lake	C
Lumby	D
Lytton / Lytton First Nation / Kanaka Bar (T'eqt'aqtn'mux) / Nicomen Indian Band / Siska Indian Band / Skuppah Indian Band	A
Merritt/Coldwater Indian Band/Lower Nicola Indian Band/Upper Nicola Band	B
Miocene	A
Nakusp	A
Nelson	B
Nemaiah Valley / Xeni Gwet'in First Nation Government	A
New Denver	A
Oliver	C
Osoyoos	C

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Health Authority and Community	RSA Community Designation
Pavillion / Ts'kw'aylaxw First Nation	A
Princeton	A
Redstone Reserve	A
Revelstoke	A
Riske Creek / Toosey Band / Tl'esqox	A
Salmo	A
Salmon Arm	C
Savona / Skeetchestn Indian Band	B
Seton Portage / Seton Lake / N'Quatqua First Nation / Shalalth / Tsal'alh	A
Sicamous	C
Sirdar	A
Slocan Park	B
Sorrento	C
Sparwood	A
Spences Bridge / Cook's Ferry Indian Band	A
Sun Peaks	B
Tatla Lake / Alexis Creek First Nation (Tsi Del Del)	A
Tatlayoko Lake	A
Trail/Rossland/Fruitvale	B
Wardner	A
Wasa	B
Williams Lake / Soda Creek Indian Band (Xatsull First Nation)	B
Winlaw	A
Island	
Ahousaht (Flores Island)	A
Alert Bay / Namgis First Nation	A
Bamfield / Huu-au-aht First Nation	A
Campbell River / Campbell River Indian Band (Wei Wai Kum) /Dzawada'enuxw First Nation / Homalco First Nation	C
Chemainus / Halalt First Nation / Lyackson First Nation	C
Cobble Hill	C
Cortes Island / Klahoose First Nation	A
Courtenay / Comox / Cumberland / K'ómoks First Nation	C
Demam Island	C
Duncan / N. Cowichan / Cowichan Band	C
Gabriola Island	C
Galiano Island	B
Gilford Island / Kwikwasut'inuxw Haxwa'mis	A
Gold River / Mowachaht-Muchalaht First Nation	A
Holberg	A
Hornby Island	A
Hot Springs Cove / Hesquiaht	A
Kingcome (Dzawada'enuxw First Nation)	A
Kyuquot	A

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Health Authority and Community	RSA Community Designation
Ladysmith	C
Lake Cowichan / Lake Cowichan First Nation	C
Lasqueti Island	A
Mayne Island	B
Mill Bay	C
Nitinat / Ditidaht First Nation	C
Parksville / Qualicum / Qualicum First Nation	C
Pender Island	B
Penelakut Island	C
Port Alberni	C
Port Alice	A
Port Hardy / Gwa'sala-Nakwazda'xw / Kwakiutl First Nation (Kwakwaka'wakw) / Tlatlasikwala First Nation	A
Port McNeill	A
Port Renfrew/ Pacheedaht First Nation	A
Quadra Island / Cape Mudge Indian Band	C
Quatsino / Quatsino First Nation	A
Saltspring Island	C
Saturna Island	B
Sayward	A
Shawnigan Lake	C
Sointula	A
Tahsis	A
Tofino /Tla-O-Qui-Aht First Nations	A
Ucluelet / Macoah / Toquaht Nation / Ucluelet First Nation (Yuuʔuʔiʔath)	A
Woss	A
Zeballos / Ehattesaht First Nation / Nuchatlaht Indian Band	A
Northern	
Alexandria / Alexandria Indian Band / ?Esdilagh	A
Alexis Creek/Tl'etinqox-T'in Government / Yeneskit'in Government /Yunesti'in	A
Atlin / Taku River Tlingit First Nation	A
Blueberry River First Nation	A
Burns Lake / Francois Lake	A
Canim Lake / Canim Lake Band	A
Cheslatta	A
Chetwynd / Saulteau / Saulteau First Nations	A
Dawson Creek	A
Dease Lake	A
Dease River First Nation	A
Doig River	A
Fort Babine	A
Fort Nelson / Fort Nelson First Nation	A
Fort St. James/Binche	A
Fort St. John/Taylor	A

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Health Authority and Community	RSA Community Designation
Fort Ware	A
Fraser Lake	A
Granisle	A
Grassy Plains	A
Halfway River	A
Hartley Bay / Kulkayu	A
Hazelton / Gitanmaax Band / Glen Vowell (Sik-e-Dakh)/Hagwilget Village (Tse-kya) / Kispiox Band (Anspayaxw)	A
Houston	A
Hudson's Hope / West Moberly First Nations	A
Kelly Lake	A
Kitimat	A
Kitkatla / Gitxaala Nation	A
Kitsault	A
Kitwanga (Gitwangak Band) / Gitanyow / Gitsegulka	A
Lax Kw'alaams (Port Simpson)	A
Lhook'uz Dene Nation	A
Lower Post / Daylu Dena Council (Kaska Dena Council)	A
Mackenzie	A
Masset / Old Masset Village Council	A
McBride	A
McLeod Lake Indian Band	A
Metlakatla	A
Middle River	A
Nadleh	A
Nee Tahi Buhn	A
Port Clements	A
Prince George / Lheidli Tènnèh Nation	B
Prince Rupert	A
Prophet River First Nation	A
Queen Charlotte/Skidegate Band	A
Quesnel	A
Saik'uz	A
Sandspit	A
Skin Tyee	A
Smithers	A
Stellat'en	A
Stewart	A
Tachet	A
Tachie	A
Takla Landing / Takla Lake First Nation	A
Telegraph Creek / Tahltan Band	A
Terrace / Kitselas First Nation / Kitsumkalum Band	A
Tsay Keh Dene	A

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Health Authority and Community	RSA Community Designation
Ts'il Kaz Koh (Burns Lake Band)	A
Tumbler Ridge	A
Valemount	A
Vanderhoof	A
Wet'suwet'en (Broman Lake)	A
Witset (Moricetown)	A
Woyenne (Lake Babine)	A
Yekooche	A
Vancouver Coastal	
Anahim Lake / Ulkatcho First Nation	A
Bella Bella / Waglisla / Heiltsuk	A
Bella Coola / Nuxalk Nation	A
Bowen Island	C
Klemtu / Kitasoo Band	A
Madeira Park	C
Mount Currie	B
Ocean Falls	A
Pemberton	C
Powell River	C
Rivers Inlet / Oweekeno (Wuikinuxv First Nation)	A
Savary Island	A
Sechelt/Gibsons	C
Squamish / Squamish First Nation	C
Texada Island	B
Whistler	C
Nisga'a	
Greenville / Nisga'a Village of Laxgalts'ap	A
Kincolith / Nisga'a Village of Gingolx	A
New Aiyansh (Nisga'a Village of Gitlaxt'aamiks)/Canyon City (Nisga'a Village of Gitwinksihlkw)	A